

# A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us An Expository Study of the Gospel According to Luke Chapter 23- Luke 23:32-46 345- The Crucifixion of Jesus Christ- Part 1

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April 30, 2017

## **Luke 23:32-46**

**32 Two others also, who were criminals, were being led away to be put to death with Him.**

**33 When they came to the place called The Skull, there they crucified Him and the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left.**

**34 But Jesus was saying, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves.**

**35 And the people stood by, looking on. And even the rulers were sneering at Him, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if this is the Christ of God, His Chosen One."**

**36 The soldiers also mocked Him, coming up to Him, offering Him sour wine, 37 and saying, "If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself!"**

**38 Now there was also an inscription above Him, "THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS."**

**39 One of the criminals who were hanged there was hurling abuse at Him, saying, "Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!"**

**40 But the other answered, and rebuking him said, "Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?"**

**41 "And we indeed are suffering justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong."**

**42 And he was saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!"**

**43 And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."**

**44 It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour,**

**45 because the sun was obscured; and the veil of the temple was torn in two.**

**46 And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT." Having said this, He breathed His last.**

To the Glory of God

Now everything we have gone through since we began this "journey" through Dr. Luke's Gospel Record back in October of 2008 has led us to this moment. This Passage in **Luke**, however, brief it may be, is the reason that Jesus was born; it is the reason He said everything He said, and did everything He did over the last 22 Chapters, and the reason He has lived a sinless life on earth for 33-1/2 years. God took on flesh and became Man so Jesus could die. Jesus came to this earth to die in this horrific fashion. That is the reason He was born.

Jesus did not come the first time to be accepted or loved or received or worshipped, except by a very small group of Jews. Jesus came to absorb the Wrath of God against our sins. And that makes this section of **Luke** to be of utmost importance to us.

Now there are several ways I could go through these 15 verses, but I think that God would be pleased, and that you will be helped, if I go through this Passage in two different ways:

1. Illustrate the reason why Jesus had to die.
2. Examine the complete narrative of His Crucifixion from all four Gospel Records.

So, we are going to spend the next couple of weeks doing those two things. Today I want to begin by illustrating just *why* Jesus had to die and what His Death means to us today.

Now when you ask people why Jesus died, many will say something like this, "*Jesus died on the Cross for my sins*". And what they mean to say is, "*Jesus died on the Cross because of my sins*". So, the reason Jesus died was because we are sinners. But that brings up another question:

Why is my sin a Cause for Jesus to die?

On the surface, it would seem that *my* sin should be *my* problem. If I have sin in my life, that is something that *I* should have to deal

with. And that is exactly what every other religion and human philosophy teaches, that human beings have to “do” something or “become” something in order to make themselves appealing to God. But, we believe and teach that all those religions are wrong. So, why does Jesus have to die because I am a sinner? And when you ask that question, you get an answer that sounds something like this:

Jesus died for me because He loves me and wanted to save me.

Jesus absorbed the Wrath of God because He loved me. Jesus wanted to save me. So, that answer tells me that it was His great love for me that was the reason why Jesus suffered such a terrible death. And it was that same love that compelled Him to save me. And I think that is true. Thank God Jesus loved us. I praise God every day of my life because of the knowledge that an infinitely sinless Savior loved me enough to die in my place and save me. And we sing about that amazing Love and we marvel at that amazing Love. And we should. So, there is nothing that I’m about to say that you should take as me *minimizing* that Love that Jesus has for us.

But, here is the problem. As much as I agree with the statement that “Jesus died on the Cross because He loved me and wanted to save me”, I will also say that this understanding is woefully *incomplete*. It doesn’t tell the whole story. In fact, left to itself, the statement that “Jesus died for me only because He loved me” not only *doesn’t* give the complete picture, it creates a completely *different* purpose in our minds than what the Bible actually says. And please allow me to explain myself.

If the only reason Jesus died was because He loved me and wanted to save me, then that makes *me* to be the “object” of His Love. And that means that I, as a wicked rebellious sinner, am the focus of all that Jesus said and did, *including* die a horrific death on the Cross. And, if that is true, then that makes me to be infinitely more important than even Jesus Himself.

You see, most people are self-centered and they would not sacrifice their lives for *any* reason. But among the very small minority of people who actually *would* risk their lives, these people do that because they deem what they die for to be the *greater* cause, the more *important* cause. A soldier who sacrifices his life in combat is willing to do so,

because he sees his nation, and what the nation stands for, to be *more* important than his own life. A person who sacrifices his life on behalf of someone else sees the other person as *more* important and *more* valuable than himself. A mother will gladly risk her life for her children, but only because she sees her children to be *more* dear, and *more* precious, and *more* valuable than her own life.

And when human beings do this, when human beings so value something or someone else *more* than they value their own lives, we call that "heroism". And we correctly admire these people and we honor them and we uphold them and we remember their sacrifice and we pay tribute to the noblest of deeds.

But, Jesus is not a hero. Jesus is infinitely *better* than a hero. Jesus is God. And, as God, Jesus is the One Who is *more* precious and *more* valuable and *more* important. We are not better. We are not more important. We are not more valuable than Jesus. Look at how the Apostle Paul talked about this from **Romans 5:6-21**:

**6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.**

**7 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die.**

**8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.**

**9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.**

**10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.**

**11 And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.**

**12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned —**

**13 for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.**

**14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.**

**15** But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.

**16** The gift is not like *that which came* through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment *arose* from one *transgression* resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift *arose* from many transgressions resulting in justification.

**17** For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

**18** So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men.

**19** For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.

**20** The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,

**21** so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

So, Jesus is the Treasure, Jesus is the Prize, Jesus is the Object of not only our admiration and honor, Jesus is the Object of our worship and our adoration and our obedience.

So, yes, Jesus absolutely does love us. But Jesus *cannot* love you more than He loves *Himself*, because that would be idolatry. 1450 years before Jesus was born, God the Holy Spirit moved upon Moses to write this:

#### **Deuteronomy 6:4**

**"Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!**

Now this is called "the Shema", and it is the foundational Doctrine of the entire Bible. Over against the pagan religions of the world who worship a plurality of false man-made "gods", the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. the God Who is revealed in Scripture, the Father of Jesus Christ is "one". He is single and stands alone in His one Essence or Nature or Substance.

And this one God is, also, at the same time, He is "one" in His Essence or Nature or Substance; He is eternally manifested in three distinct Persons of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. And that makes God the Son, Jesus Christ, and God the Holy Spirit to be equal in Deity to God the Father.

And so, the reason that Hinduism and Buddhism and Taoism and all of the other "polytheistic" religions of the world are all wrong is because of what God demands and expects from us as a result of God being "one". After God revealed Himself to be "one" God said:

**Deuteronomy 6:5**

**You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.**

Now in His great Wisdom and Power, God made the human vessel in such a way that he can only set his affections on one thing at a time. Human beings can only have one Object of their love at a time. And so, we love one thing. But, as we love one thing, we cannot love something else at the same time and to the same degree. We can only set our affections on one thing at a time.

And God says here that the one single Object of all our affections should be Him. And then He went into what extent we are to love Him:

**... with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.**

So, to love God "to some extent" is not enough. That doesn't obey this Command. Even to love God "a lot" does not obey this Command. And so, to tip our hat at God and throw Him a quarter once a week is not at all what God expects and demands from us. We are to love God *totally*, and we are to love God *continuously*, and we are to love God *exclusively*, solely, only. We are not to divide our affections; we are not to divide our love between God and anyone or anything else.

God is the One Who demands and expects absolute and continual love with all that is in our hearts, and all that is in our soul, and with every ounce of strength we have. And, later on, Jesus raised the bar even further and added that we are to love God with all our minds as well.

So, in the beginning, God created human beings so that we would love God *totally* and we would love Him *continuously* and we would love God *exclusively*.

Now some would object to this exclusivity by saying, "*Wait a minute! What about my wife? What about my children? What about my country? God told me to love those things too!*"

And I would remind you that *all* of that came *after* the Fall. And *none* of that will be in Heaven. Your understanding of what it will be like to love God totally and continuously and exclusively is not *anything* that you can see here on earth. Marriage and children and nations are all things that came forth after Man fell and after He was cursed and do *not* represent how things will be in Heaven. There is no reference on earth as to what Heaven will be like. And that is why the Apostle Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 2:9**:

***THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND WHICH HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM.***

In Heaven, there will be no division among nations. In Heaven, there will be no Marriages and there will be no children. Everything that we know and see and experience and love here on earth now as human beings is the result of rebellion and it is all cursed. And that means it is all temporary.

What is in Heaven is God. And what we will do in Heaven is we will worship and adore and magnify God, forever! And we won't do that out of duty or obligation; we will do it because we will see God in His unfiltered brilliance and magnificence! We will behold the one, true, and living God as He is, not hidden and not in types or shadows or symbols. We will not see God in Heaven in words either. We will behold God in His fullness and we will marvel at what we see! We will admire what we see. We will be in awe of what we see. And we will love and adore what we see.

So, God commanded us to love Him *totally* and *continuously* and *exclusively*. And so, another way of understanding sin is to say that sin is to set our affections on something or someone *other* than God. It is to love what is fallen and passing away more or even to the same extent as God. It is to divide our love between what is temporary and what is the

result of the Fall, and God. So, sin is to rob God of our total love and our continuous love and our exclusive love, and set that love on something else. Sin is to love God *partially* and to love Him *by times* and *on occasion*, while loving something else that God made. So, sin is not loving God *totally* and *continuously* and *exclusively*.

But, we need to understand that not all of God's Commandments are eternal. For example, the dietary laws and the ceremonial laws and the prescriptive laws of worship are not eternal. And they aren't eternal because they pertain only to the Jew and the nation of Israel as they lived under the partial and inferior Revelation of the Old Covenant.

But some of God's Commandments are eternal because these Commandments reflect the infinite Worth and Value of God's Own Personal Character and Nature. And so, the eternal Commandments of the Old Covenant were repeated under the New. In fact, many of them were elevated to actually be higher and better under the final, full, and completed Revelation of God under the New Covenant. And loving God totally and continuously and exclusively is one of the Commandments that is repeated in the New Covenant and is eternal because it reflects God's Personal Value and Worth.

So, we have to understand that the reason God tells us not to have any other "gods" before *us* is because God doesn't have any other "gods" before *Himself*. And the reason God told *us* to love God *totally* and *continuously* and *exclusively* is because God loves God *totally* and *continuously* and *exclusively*, and will not divide His Love.

And that means that God did not become flesh and then die on the Cross simply because He loved us. And if that statement offends you, it is only because you are fallen and you like the notion that God puts you first. You enjoy being made much of. You delight that Jesus died because He loved you and that's it. And so, when you read verses like **John 15:13** that says:

**Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.**

... you rejoice that Jesus loved you so much that He lay down His Life for you and called you His "friend". And your understanding of what Jesus actually accomplished by dying on the Cross begins and ends with *yourself*.



So, I will tell you that there is much more as to why Jesus died that doesn't make us to be more important than God. God took on flesh and lived a completely sinless life here on earth for 33-1/2 years and died a horrific death on the Cross and then rise three days later so that wicked, fallen rebels could be so radically changed by this amazing Act, that we would love God *totally* and *continuously* and *exclusively*. In other words:

Jesus died because He loved us and wanted to save us-  
so that by saving us- we would love God.

So, yes, Jesus loved us! Yes, we are loved by Jesus! But, no, He does *not* love us like a man loves His wife. Jesus does *not* love us like a parent loves his children, or like a soldier loves his nation. God's Love for us has no earthly equals; no fallen comparisons. God loves us so that we will love Him. God sets His love upon us so that He may radically transform us from our fallen condition where our loves are divided, so that we will find the fullness of Joy in loving Him totally and continuously and exclusively! God loves us so much that He *rescues* us from the Penalty of our sin and changes us so thoroughly that we will delight in knowing and loving and enjoying God forever!

And so, I am trying to say this morning that this Grace, the Grace of God in saving sinners, this Power that boldly steals fallen rebels from satan's dominion and radically and eternally transforms them by what He alone does for them, by taking on flesh and dying in their place- is *magnified*, and this Grace is *displayed* and it is *seen* and *marveled at* best and the most and the highest when we are so changed that we love God totally and continuously and exclusively.

So, I am absolutely convinced from everything I read from the 66 Books of the Holy Bible that God does what He does for one single reason:

So that He will be glorified

That is God's Purpose in all that He does from creating a mountain to managing the Universe to taking on flesh and dying by Crucifixion. This is what makes God "tick". God's overriding Passion in all that He does is that He will be known and loved and magnified and

celebrated and enjoyed and worshipped and treasured by His creatures. That is the single catalyst as to *why* God does everything that He does. And, in the Bible, that single Cause is expressed in several different ways. So, when people inquire, "*Why did God do that?*" God responds by saying that He did it:

For My Glory!

or,

For My Name's Sake!

or,

So, they will know that there is none like Me in all the earth!

Now, back at the beginning of this Century, by God's Grace, I stumbled into seeing this concept for the first time as I was struggling to read Jonathan Edwards. And I say "struggling to read" because I can't read what Edwards wrote very fast or very well. And I forget much more of what Edwards wrote than I remember. But, here is what I do remember. Edwards was smitten by this Truth. It *dominated* his thinking. It *consumed* him. And this Truth radically changed him. And as I dove deeply into this Truth myself, I saw that it was what the Puritans talked about the most. And it was what the early Church Fathers talked about more than anything else.

And the more I studied this, it began to consume me as well. And so, from the very beginnings of this Century, this single theme of God's Passion for His Own Glory has dominated much of what I have written and preached. And as I stand before you this morning, I am more convinced than I have ever been of the three things:

1. God knows God infinitely,
2. Therefore, God loves God fully,
3. Which means that God values God completely.

And that means that nothing means more to God than that He is known and loved and magnified and celebrated and enjoyed and worshipped and treasured.

But, I'm not telling you this simply because I believe it. I am telling you this because this Truth is inextricably woven into the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ. So, my goal in this series on the Crucifixion will be to prove to you from Scripture that Jesus died so that wicked rebels could be so radically transformed by what God did for them, all by Himself (at great Cost to Himself, the Death of His Son), that they would be able to know God (as God knows Himself), and they would be able to love God (the way God loves Himself), and so, they could enjoy God forever (the way that God enjoys Himself). And the first proof is found in **Ephesians 1:4b-6**, so please go there with me:

**4 ... In love**

**5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,**

**6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.**

Here the Apostle Paul teaches us that God “**predestined**” us to **adoption as sons**. And that is just another way of saying what he said back in verse 4:

**Ephesians 1:4a**

**just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him.**

So, before the foundation of the world, God chose to “set His Love” upon us to save us so that we would be holy and blameless before Him, and be adopted into His family as sons. And, in verse 5, the Apostle said that God did this:

**... through Jesus Christ ...**

So, us becoming holy and without blame, and us being adopted into His family as sons, could not be accomplished by or through *anything* that we could “do” or “become” ourselves. The *one* way, the

*only* way that God could take fallen rebels and make them holy and adopt them was “through” Jesus. And the way this is written in the original Greek tells us that that the fact that it was “through” Jesus means that it was through Jesus *personally* and through what Jesus *did*.

So, “Who Jesus is” and “what Jesus did”, all by Himself, with no help or cooperation from us, in any way, is what allowed sinners to be made holy and adopted sons. And so, all of the particularities of Jesus’ Own Personal Character and Nature, like His full Deity in concert with His full Humanity, and what Jesus did, like His virgin Birth, His sinless Life, His perfect Teaching, His vicarious Death, His Bodily Resurrection and Ascension, is the “means” or the “way” or the “catalyst” that allowed lost sinners to become holy and adopted.

Now, why in the world would a God, Who needs nothing, do this for us? Many in the modern Church would respond by saying, “*Because He loved us so.*” But if you really think about that answer, you come to the conclusion that *you* are so valuable, *you* are so important to God that *you* are the primary focus of God. And I don’t just think that is the wrong answer, I think that is blasphemy. So, look what the Apostle Paul says is the reason God did all this from the end of verse 5:

**... according to the kind intention of His will**

This is just another expression of Who God is. He is kind, but not like a grandfather is kind to help his grandchild get a leg up on life by doing something for him. No, God is kind to us in giving us the greatest Gift of all, Himself. The single most important thing that God can do for anyone is not to heal their sick body or help them become financially well-off or get them a new home or a bigger car or even a better wife.

No, the single best Gift that God can give to anyone is *Himself*. Because, God is the best and most beautiful and most valuable and most important Commodity in the Universe. So, for God to give you Himself is the height of Divine Kindness. There isn’t anything God could do for us that would be better. But, there is a terrible problem that keeps God from giving you the Gift of Himself. Sin.

You see, we are fallen creatures. We are sinners. We are lost and corrupt. We have been radically and negatively ruined by the Fall. And

in various places, the Bible describes what it means to be fallen and lost:

**Romans 3:10b-12**

**10 ... *THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE;***

**11 *THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;***

**12 *ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE.***

But, perhaps the best summary statement in the entire Bible that illustrates what it means to be a normal everyday human being after the Fall is found in **Genesis 6:5** that says:

**Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.**

Now look closely at that middle phrase. God said that after the Fall:

**... the wickedness of man was great on the earth**

Now, the word “**great**” here means “all-pervasive”. So, Mankind’s wickedness was “**all-pervasive**”, meaning it touched every area of human existence, including his choices, his thoughts, his actions, and his state of being. And then the Holy Spirit moved upon Moses to say this at the end of verse 5:

**... every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually**

Look at the two exclusive words here: “**every**” and “**only**”. This means that after our first parents rebelled against God, human beings have no capacity for any “Good”, at all. None. It means that we are “all evil” and we are “all evil” “all the time”. And that is what it means to be lost and fallen and a sinner.

So, what does God have to do, to cause people who are in that dreadful condition, to suddenly love God? What does God have to do to allow for fallen rebels to want to know and delight themselves in God?

What does God have to do to bring about the radical transformation that is necessary for lost people to find the highest and best and fullest expression of Joy in God, and not in things that are passing away? Or, in the words of the Apostle Paul, what does God have to do to cause people who are utterly separated from God, because of their sins, to become holy and without blame and to be adopted into His Family? This is what Salvation really is, God choosing to radically transform fallen sinners so they may be made holy and be adopted into His Family!

But to what end does God do all this? What is the Purpose and Reason why God went through so much trouble to redeem fallen humanity? Why did Isaiah say:

**Isaiah 53:10a**

**But the Lord was pleased To crush Him, putting *Him* to grief ...**

And, if your answer is, "*Well, God gets us and He gets a Family*", once again, you are saying that *you* are the focus of God, and that *you* are so valuable and so important to God that He did all of this. And that puts *you* and *your welfare* ahead of God and His Glory. And that is not just wrong, that is idolatry. So, what does the Bible say is the reason? Look at the beginning of **Ephesians 1:6**:

**to the praise of the glory of His grace**

So, God's Grace has a "glory" to it. It has a beauty and a value to it. God's Grace shines forth in its brilliance. And because God's Grace is valuable, and because it is beautiful, and because it is important, it must be admired and celebrated and praised. God's Grace must be valued and treasured and exalted and esteemed very highly.

But, in order for God's Grace to be marveled at and celebrated, it must be seen and understood. And God's Grace cannot be seen or understood unless it is manifested; unless it is shown. So, the manifestation, or the display, or the showing of God's Grace reveals the Glory of it. And seeing and understanding the Glory of God's Grace brings forth a praise for it.

So, when we see God's Grace displayed, it elicits a wondering and a marveling and a celebration of it. And that marveling and celebration is the praise.

So, for God's Grace to be praised and valued and celebrated, it must be understood. And if God's Grace is to be understood, it must be seen. And if God's Grace is going to be seen, it must be manifested or displayed. And for God's Grace to be displayed or revealed means that somebody needed it.

So, the *reason* that God revealed His Grace to fallen rebels, the *reason* that God manifested His Love to unworthy sinners, the *reason* that God displayed His Mercy to evil people, is not you. The reason is that by demonstrating unmerited Love to those who did not deserve it, God's Grace would be "seen". And by seeing God's Grace redeem the offspring of Adam, the beauty and the wisdom of God's Grace would be "understood". And through understanding the unparalleled majesty of God's Grace, it would be "marveled at", it would be "celebrated", and it would be "praised". And that is why God created Salvation.

So, the first thing we come up with is this:

### **1. The Best and Highest and most Important Display of God's Glory throughout His created Universe, is the Display of His Grace.**

Nothing comes close to magnifying the infinite Worth and Value of God's Glory like the display of His Grace to patently unworthy recipients. So, Grace is the endpoint in the Revelation of God's Glory. And this is seen in the way that God's Wrath serves to make God more glorious for the vessels of Mercy. Look at **Romans 9:22-24**:

**22** What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction?

**23** And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory,

**24** *even* us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles.

So, Paul asks a question in verse 22:

*What if God endured with much patience the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, even though He desired to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known?*

In other words, Paul is asking:

*What if God didn't always immediately destroy the evil people as soon as they did evil things?*

Now this is an historic question. Millions of people have asked this question. It is the foundation of all atheism. *"If God is Sovereign, and if God is Good, then why doesn't He destroy all the evil in the world? Why does a Good and Powerful God allow evil to continue?"*

Now, manifestly, evil is in the world. We see evil manifested every day in ten thousand different ways. The reality of war and diseases and poverty and crime and injustice proves to us that evil is everywhere. So, we cannot deny evil. And so, some people answer this by saying, *"God is not Sovereign"*. And they elevate Human Self-Determinism and "Human Free-Will". Others answer, *"God is not Good?"* And they become bitter and angry and merciless. And still others answer, *"God is not"*. And they become atheists.

But, the same Apostle that asked the question answers it in verses 23-24:

***He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles.***

So, when we examine the Passage on the Crucifixion in **Luke 23** that Brother Andy just read to us, we need to incorporate *this* single Cause into our understanding and say that the *main* reason, the *most important* reason, the *overriding* reason why Jesus died by Crucifixion was *not* to illustrate how much He loved us, even though it is true that Jesus loves us. It was *not* to give an example of selfless-sacrifice, even though Jesus' example is the perfect example of selfless-sacrifice. And it was not to illustrate the historic tension between people in positions of power and the poor, even though there is that tension. No, Jesus was murdered by Crucifixion for the very same reason that God made the



Universe, out of nothing, in six distinct 24-hour divisions of time, called "days":

For God's Glory!

So, Jesus died for God's Glory. Jesus died a horrifically painful and agonizing death so that God would be known and loved and magnified and celebrated and enjoyed and worshipped and treasured above all that has been made. And that makes us say this:

## **2. The Glorification of God's Grace was Planned before Creation.**

**Ephesians 1:5-6**

**5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,  
6 to the praise of the glory of His grace**

The Apostle writes here, under the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit, that the adoption of sons through Jesus Christ in Salvation is what brings praise to the Glory of God's Grace. And the fact that verse 5 says that God *predestined* this to occur tells us that not only were we, as *individuals*, predestined to be saved, but that the magnification of God's Grace in saving unworthy sinners was *also* predestined. And that also means that the way by which sinners would be redeemed was also predestined.

## **3. The Glorification of God's Grace in Salvation was Predestined to Happen Only Through the Son of God, Jesus Christ.**

**Ephesians 1:5-6**

**5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,  
6 to the praise of the glory of His grace**

Before God created the Universe, He determined in Himself to glorify His Grace by Jesus Christ *personally* and through what Jesus did by living sinlessly, dying on the Cross in the place of sinners, and rising from the dead on the third day.

## **2 Timothy 1:8-10**

**8** Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with *me* in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God,

**9** who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,

**10** but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,

**4. God Predestined that the Pinnacle of God's Glorification of His Grace was Designed to be Christ's Crucifixion for Sinners.**

## **The Revelation 13:8**

**All who dwell on the earth will worship him, *everyone* whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.**

Way before there was any human sin to die for, God planned that His Son would be slain for sinners. And we know this because of the name given to the "book of life" before creation. That Book is called **the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.**

**5. God's Glorification of His Grace in the Crucifixion of His Son for Sinners was the Ultimate Purpose for Creating the Universe.**

## **Colossians 1:15-20**

**15** He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

**16** For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things have been created through Him and for Him.

**17** He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

**18** He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

**19** For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,

**20 and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, *I say*, whether things on earth or things in heaven.**

### **The Revelation 15:3**

**And they sang the song of Moses, the bond-servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are Your works, O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Your ways, King of the nations!"**

### **The Revelation 5:8-10**

**8 When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.**

**9 And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood *men* from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.**

**10 "You have made them *to be* a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth."**

## **6. Therefore God Planned from Eternity that the Revelation of His Glory Would be the Ultimate Reason for Creating the Universe.**

This Glory would be supremely displayed in God's Grace. This Grace would be supremely glorified in Jesus. And so, the best and highest and most important way that this glorification in Jesus would be reached was when the sinless Lamb of God was slain to save a people who would spend eternity magnifying the greatness of that Grace by loving God totally and continuously and exclusively.

In other words, the universe was created for the glorification of God's Grace at Calvary, echoing through eternity in the Christ-exalting joys of the redeemed. And that is why Jesus died on the Cross.

God took all of the sins of all of God's elect and He laid them on Jesus through the miracle of Imputation. And the terrible insult that our sin made against the pristine Righteousness of God was adjudicated as Jesus screamed in agony as the Fury of God's Wrath was poured out without measure on Jesus.

So, God's Righteousness was defended. Our sins were judged and damned. But, we were spared. And now, with the new nature that God

gave us through the miracle of the New Birth, we are now blessed to be among those who will love God totally and continuously and exclusively in Heaven forever! Amen. Let's pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.